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"Speak unto this people that they go forward"

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THE UNITARIAN ADVANCE

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CONTENTS FOR MARCH, 1917

		Page
Editorials		169
Finding One's Soul	*Rev. A. L. Weatherly*	172
The Highest Morality	*Rev. Joseph A. Kyle*	173
What O'Clock Is It in Religion		176
The Personal and the Impersonal in Religion	*Rev. E. H. Reeman*	177
Constructive Liberalism	*Rev. J. Morris Evans*	181
The Quarter-Hour Communion	*Dr. Frank Carleton Doan*	182
Western Conference News		185
New England Letter		189
Fellowship Notices		190
League Report		190
Unitarian Service Pension Society		191
In Memoriam, Mrs. Emma Savage		192
New Books		192
Hymn (*A Poem*)	*Rev. H. H. Barber, D. D.*	192
Love's Shrine (*A Poem*)	*Harriet Lake-Burch*	192

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The Unitarian Advance

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ARE we at war, or not at war? By the time our readers have received this writing, doubtless everybody will know, but as our *copy* is prepared for the printers nobody knows. Our nation is not now on speaking terms with one of the world's great powers. We have declared with firmness that we cannot stand in relations of avowed friendliness with a nation whose ideals of international honor tolerate the program of "ruthlessness" which Germany has declared. On the other hand we refuse to assume the attitude of enmity until actual events force us to hostile action, and then only in terms of armed defence of our own rights upon the sea. We believe that the President's attitude in this whole matter has been eminently wise, firm, patriotic and self-respecting. He has never yielded the point for which America has insisted; he has never fumbled the issue involved by any weak concessions; yet he has insisted that every other means than war be fully tried for securing from Germany recognition of the principles we stand for. For a year and a half we have deferred for the world the program of ruthlessness declared two years ago. During that period a victory, not of arms but of diplomacy, was vouchsafed us. Now that Germany believes that the dire straits to which she is reduced require abandonment of her agreement with us, as a nation we take the attitude which we would have taken then had Germany not yielded to our diplomacy. But we take it with a tone of good will, patience and humanitarian forbearance, added to the sterner tone of emphasized self-respect and determined insistence upon our principles. Would the world be a bit better off if rasher steps two years ago had forced the issue then? Would American honor, pride and self-respect be more illustrious than now, when, after a year and a half of restraint of the evil custom put on Germany because of our methods of diplomacy, we, without the least suspicion of hatred or malice, prejudice or hasty panic, take a step that usually leads to immediate war, but which in this case is attended by greatest reluctance for overt action on either side?

* * *

FOR the fact is, there is no hatred between the people of Germany and those of America; and it would be hard to create such ill will. While the mass of our people have doubtless taken sides in the great war, as was inevitable—and the majority of us "side" with the "Allies" rather than the "Central Powers," it is easier for people in this country than those of the belligerent nations to realize that all the right is not on one side, or all the wickedness on the other; that it is not merely an issue between "Prussian Militarism" and Anglo-Saxon and French "enlightenment." Issues are more complex, national motives more complicated; and, at heart, there is in Germany a sturdy passion of idealism and national aspiration which for its people seem at issue, too, in this conflict. Its campaign of "barbaric ruthlessness" is indeed utterly abhorrent to us. Yet in the last analysis all warfare is so ruthlessly barbaric that the shadings of its conventions of "fair and unfair" may easily confuse the lay mind. All warfare hits hardest at noncombatants; women and children suffer most cruelly; all warfare strikes at neutrals as well as belligerents. It cannot be helped, and the final "victory" to be won by any party in this conquest is not the crushing of "Prussian Militarism," but the whole cursed scheme of war. The ruthlessness and barbarism of Germany is something that America indeed cannot stand for. We are right in breaking off diplomatic relations with a nation practicing such. But Germany's harsh method is but the last inexorable logic of warfare's method, faced with unshrinking courage. War always means that sort of thing in its essential spirit.

* * *

IS "peace without victory" an inspiration—or an absurdity? Of course the later development of events forcing the United States itself so near the verge

of war on her own part, tends to eclipse the significance of President Wilson's peace message which preceded the diplomatic break. Yet the significance of that peace utterance is just as vital now as when first issued, and may have explicit meaning for ourselves, now that we are threatened with entanglement in the world's woeful snarl of warfare. "Peace without victory" is, of course, a pitiful absurdity of pacifism if it means "peace at any price" or "peace without regard to principle." But that was precisely what the President did not mean, and he took pains to make his meaning evident. He was speaking of peace without "war victory" not peace without "ideal victory." A "war victory" is almost inevitably a defeat of ideals and a hindrance to actual peace or prosperity, even for the victorious nation. It means too often a peace of "half-measures," because the conquering power represents an *ex parte* cause which is not symmetrically just. One finds it hard in reviewing history to discover a single great war fought between great nations in which all the right was on one side and all the wrong on the other side. On the other hand one finds it hard to discover a single great war which was terminated by a "peace with victory" for either party. The cases where the "victory" was most decisive have oftenest been cases where the result was least just or beneficial to human progress. Wars are seldom fought out to the "bitter end"; though alas too often prolonged dismally through a "bitter middle," where both sides suffer cruelly in equal fellowship of disaster before coming to the point of seeking peace, not through "victory" but through new understanding."

* * *

FOR the only effectual issue of any war is a "new understanding"—a discovery that force and hatred, though combined with most glorious sacrifices of patriotic heroism, cannot have their own way. Besides, civilization never wins when force is the sole factor of settlement—even though it be force arrayed on the right side. "Victory," in the military sense, is a deterrent of idealistic progress, because victory in the military sense means might made right, with only a gambling chance that right and might may in a given case be identical. Peace by conciliation, by thoughtful scrutiny of issues involved, by human minds coming together to deal with causes of controversy, not with a scowl of angry hatred, but with a serious calm of tragedy's harsh discipline—such peace may be obtained by victories of the spirit which are worth more to civilization in the long run, because neither side scores the triumph of arrogant superiority in brutishness. We cannot help believing that the President's noble peace utterance marks an epoch in our own national evolution, if not even more, a new chapter in world idealism.

* * *

HOW rich is the American Unitarian Association? A "suburban minister" living in the very zone of Boston's sacred soil recently gave voice in the *Christian Register* to the worries of his soul over the fact that the Association talks very poor while it is actually very rich. The issue is interesting, though not very important. Of course the A. U. A. has a huge bank account. Its investments run over a million, and are mostly very shrewd investments; and every year, churches, Sunday schools, Alliances and individual men and women are implored with considerable success to give generously into its expansive coffers. Does that make the A. U. A. rich? Of course next day—or perhaps only after he read Secretary Nobbs' brilliant rejoinder in the *Christian Register*—this suburban pastor realized how ungermane the terms "rich" and "poor" are, when applied to an organization like our National Association. In actual fact the Association can possess nothing of itself but a *big responsibility.* That bank account is somebody else's bank account; those fat investments are somebody else's investments—the Association exists solely for the business of seeing that those other people get what belongs to them. This of course is so elemental in the understanding of all trust-holding organizations that it seems almost puerile to call attention to it. Yet the blunder is so often made of imagining there's a "rich corporation" somewhere on the ground which needs only to have its

tender sympathies aroused to make its generosities unlimited in any local case, that it is good now and then to have a guileless "suburban minister" say the ancient thing, in order to give refreshing opportunity for repeating the age-old explanation.

* * *

IF THE American Unitarian Association does its bounden duty, each year, it simply spends every cent it has received in interest or gifts during the year, for one specific purpose: *Pushing the cause of the Unitarian gospel.* There is the whole story. From its own corporate viewpoint there are no riches and no poverty; there is simply work to do, under more or less embarrassing circumstances. Income equals expenditure, with no reserve held back waiting any especial cry for sympathy or plaint of hard luck here or there. If more is spent in one place, less is spent somewhere else. Under healthy conditions the income never equals the demand; for the demand is as big as all the mistake, ignorance, timidity, sin, and misfortune of an imperfect world. The Unitarian budget never can catch up with the Unitarian need. We are, all of us, pitiably poor, in that sense; and to the degree in which the A. U. A. makes itself simply the denominational pocket-book—or better, the denominational counting-house—our poverty is its poverty—and to talk about its "riches" is to be guilty of a forlorn joke or more forlorn stupidity.

* * *

OF COURSE the question may arise at any time whether the Association's manner of administering its trust is always the wisest or most economical; whether the equation between "overhead expenses" and actual field service is always kept rational; whether organized efficiencies are properly watched out for; in final word, whether those doing the actual work are the right ones to do the work and whether the policies they pursue are the best. But whose business is it to give effectual answer to these questions? If the A. U. A. is in very fact "just ourselves" organized for action, who but "just ourselves" are to blame for it if anything goes continuously wrong? Its directors are there from our choice; its officers are there through our suffrance; its policies are subject to our ratification at every annual meeting of the Association. What more could we ask?

* * *

OF COURSE the "more that we can ask"—and ought to demand—is more effectual *responsibility* out among the constituencies of the Association—more eager sense of a responsibility that can not wholly be delegated or evaded. From the point of view of its constituency, the Association is humiliatingly poor—almost disgracefully poor. It can not begin to do a quarter part of the work that ought to be done. The significant fact is that the constituency is rich and not poor—rich not only in money but rich in intellectual and spiritual resources, rich in opportunity, rich in potential equipment. When the Association makes the sort of special appeal which it is urging this year, it is only asking in the reticence and diffidence of its habitual expectations, and not at all to the measure of the possibilities of the field. The crying, poverty-stricken need of the world for what the Unitarian Church has to give meets only a petty part of the response it ought to receive—not because we can not better meet it, but because we do not better meet it. We are rich, and our Association is poor, according to any honest scale of proportions which the achievements of other denominations afford us for comparison.

* * *

THAT was a good meeting which the Life Members of the American Unitarian Association held together in Boston last month, and, if reports reaching us are accurate, it was more than a "mutual admiration affair"; it actually counted in the quickening of the zeal of and kindling of the spirit of devotion of those in attendance—which is all to the good. It is futile, doubtless, to raise one's voice any longer in protest against the Life Member system, or ever to whisper regrets that the officers of the Association see fit at this time to direct their influence frankly and unreservedly to the augmenting of this feature of our national organization. There seems to us some irony in the fact that the Unitarian fellowship is the only religious denomination left to

cling to the archaic Life-Member theory of national organization; that we, of all people, seem to shrink from the hazards of straight democracy in its representation forms, which outside of Unitarianism is the universal method of religious organization. If it would do any good we would lift our voice in raucous protest. But what is the use? The great thing that concerns us Unitarians at just this crisis is to *get things done,* and any system that makes for efficiency is the method we stand by. Now that the American Unitarian Association, just as it is, is doing its work efficiently, progressively, sturdily, we say, *"Go On!"* But we wish our people could also find the time to be consistent with their democracy.

FINDING ONE'S SOUL.

"What doth it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" Many a man weary with the struggle after the possession of things has repeated the question of Jesus. It is not merely the pursuit of material things that is vanity but also immaterial things on which the energy of life is wasted. Men seek honor, social position, the applause of the big world or the little world in which they live, only to find on securing them that they are mere baubles that can please only a childish fancy. The savage will give hours of toil for a paltry string of beads. The civilized man laughs at him and then strains every nerve to secure a ribbon or a title that passes for no more than a bead in the world of reality.

We are constantly measuring ourselves in terms of the things that we seek. We partake of the eternal by seeking eternal things. We are ennobled by our devotion to noble things. He who stands for justice and righteousness, who endeavors to find mercy and sympathy, who strives to bring in the rule of brotherhood, forgets himself. He is not concerned with paltry honors for himself. He does not care for recognition or social position. In this forgetting he finds himself. He passes unconsciously from a lower to a higher plane in which the coinage of the lower does not pass current.

We stay in the lower and strive for the beads and spangles just because we have never got a glimpse of the other world. It is not far distant from us. We live in it, but not until our spiritual eyes are opened do we see it. This opening of the spiritual eyes is an inward experience. It is the unfolding of inward powers. It is the achievement of the soul.

This is not a denial of the value of beads but a just recognition of their comparative value. Instead of ends they become incidents in life. They no longer dominate us but we them. It means that a man has found himself as a spiritual being. His chief desire is that abundant life from which there comes all the enduring satisfaction and joy that there is in life. The struggle which gives zest to life is no longer on the low plane of competition with others but on the higher plane of endeavor to be in thought and deed a part of the Creative Process. Energy and passion can then be exercised with no fear that they will bring sorrow to mankind or be obstacles in the way of human progress. On this higher plane the soul not only finds itself, but also finds a boundless field for the use of all its noblest powers.

REV. A. L. WEATHERLY.

FIDENTIA.

Whence came my soul,
The essential me?
I cannot know,
But this I see—
That whence I came,
Thence I must go.

I had no fear,
I felt no pain,
When here I came;
And when I go,
O Soul, this know—
Nor fear nor pain
Shall with thee go

If Father's hand
Did bring thee here,
Then that same hand
Will lead thee there.
If life has grown
From less to more,
Then life, more life,
Is still in store.

W. K. HARRISON.

The Highest Morality

By Rev. Joseph A. Kyle

Minister of the First Unitarian Church of Davenport, Iowa.

THE moral man! How can you recognize such a man—or is it impossible to distinguish him from the immoral? Have we a scales on which we can weigh him as we would weigh a pound of butter, and know whether we are getting full value? We have many standards of morality—but no standard of morality. We make morality immoral by attempting to adopt a uniform scale of conduct that shall correspond in preciseness to the weights and measures of the public market. We desire to use "morality" in but one sense—the ethical sense—and there it means "righteousness." As such it cannot be static but is ever changing, even as we men and women are changing.

What is morality? There are a thousand and one questions raised by this subject. Is morality simply the piling up of traditional customs? Is it merely social convenience? Are we to judge always from the point of view of the individual, or of society? Are there any rewards or punishments in connection with it? Is an individual justified, at times, in going absolutely contrary to every accepted standard of morality?

There is a "Yes" and a "No" in answer to every question about morality. Here we are most often dogmatic—and yet this is the very place where men have the least right to be dogmatic.

If we were seeking the easy way, we would not discuss it at all. We would simply agree with every theory—and then quietly go our own sweet way. It is also related to the question whether this is the unified world of modern science or the threefold world of ancient theology. Are we sailing this boat of ours on the seas of one world—or must we trim its sails to suit the winds of three quite different worlds?

I shall confine myself to just one phase of the question—why we choose to be moral, and whether the reason for our choice does or does not determine our morality.

Suppose a man is tempted to steal or to commit murder. And suppose he decides to work for what he wants instead of stealing it, decides to banish the hate from his heart and let his neighbor live. Shall we say he is moral because of his decision? Externally, superficially viewed, his decision must be labeled "moral"—but if we peer deeper, will it be? And if we still say, "Yes, it is moral"—can we then distinguish degrees of morality, a higher and a lower morality?

Our answer will hinge on two things: (1) the extent of a man's knowledge, his intelligence, his understanding of the world and its relationships; and (2) the deep-lying motive that prompted his decision.

Morality depends upon knowledge. The greater our knowledge, the severer is the standard by which our acts are tested. Too often this is forgotten, and mere children are sentenced as adults in our police courts. The child may, through childish ignorance, commit every crime that is forbidden to mature men and women—without our passing harsh judgment on him. The feeble-minded man or woman may truly be a menace to society—but in restraining such we do not seek to punish—but rather to care for and protect. We judge and we punish only those who understand fairly well the consequences of their acts.

Where men have a fair intelligence, they usually choose to do what we call "right" for four different reasons; and these are often hopelessly jumbled together. I separate one from the other for clearness. A man chooses to do "right" through inertia, or fear, or piety, or idealism.

Custom is another name for inertia. A man chooses to do "right" because such is the social habit. The mass movement bears him along. It demands energy and self-reliance to shake oneself free from the mass. Inertia makes many men good. We live in fairly decent social surroundings. It is easier to do "right" than to do "wrong"—it demands less energy. A man is

borne along like a straw on the broad surface of the Mississippi. Where the current goes, he goes. Half of our people are out of jail through no virtue of their own—simply because they were born and raised in respectable circles. They have accepted without thinking the respectable modes of acting and reacting. Thrown into an unwholesome environment in early youth, they would just as surely have accepted the thoughts and feelings of that environment.

O, how much of all that we love and praise about us is due to inertia—man's willingness to float with the current! Probably it is a good thing that it is so—but surely we cannot call this a high morality. Here a man is moral for the same reason that Henry Ford said he used to be a Republican—for the same reason that a donkey has ears: he was born that way.

Fear causes many men many times in life to choose the "right" rather than the "wrong." Here we have a certain kind of morality—that induced by fear—but it is never a very high morality. There are none of the finer shades of value to be found in such. It is half cowardice, half selfish greed. One pursues the "right" course simply to save his own hide. In low stages of society, it is probably good that even fear could make men respect the rights of others.

There is the fear of other men. I will not steal your horse—lest you kill me or steal mine. I will not strike you—lest you strike back. I will not pursue a course condemned by all my neighbors—lest they drive me from their midst. I cannot live without their friendship and cooperation. I will not grievously harm my neighbors—lest their courts and police do me a greater harm. Here is morality based on fear of retaliation.

It is not only his fellows that man fears. Man may fear nature, or his conscience, or things supernatural. There are certain offenses against nature that bring with them swift punishment. Without consideration of whether one desires to do either "rightly" or "wrongly," one wisely decides to keep as far away as possible from the whip-end of nature's laws. Men may do right—not through love of—but through fear of—conscience never letting up. A man may say to himself: "I would prefer to do this 'wrong' act—but I will not; I want to sleep in peace. Experience has taught me that the only way to make peace with conscience is to do 'right' always." And there is that fear of the supernatural, the fear that God will punish "wrong" doing—somehow, somewhere, sometime. It may be a fear of an immediate punishment such as Ananias and Sapphira suffered when struck dead before Peter for lying. "The way of transgressors is hard."

There are many shades of fear in religion. It is not always the crass fear of hell fire. It may be a fear of spiritual disfavor here or hereafter. It may be the fear of annihilation, the being snuffed out at the end of this life as one unworthy of the eternal. Whether it is mild or harsh, fear is fear—and it is not the basis on which to build a high morality.

Piety makes men choose the "right." There are noble souls that are moved by a sort of heroic piety. They may regret the necessity of an action—they may not be in love with it—but they will throw themselves on the side they acknowledge to be "right." They bow before a higher cause or a higher will.

> "Theirs not to reason why,
> Theirs but to do and die."

Jesus was such a man. As we have the story, he might very well have found a means of saving his life. But he would not. He was convinced that his death would be somehow the means of a spiritual rebirth for his people. Regretfully—and yet with a great composure—he bowed to such a fate, made no effort to save himself.

Socrates was another such man. He considered it his duty to stir the people of Athens from their lethargy. He made a public nuisance of himself by means of his questions and his ridicule of public men who posed as being wise when they were not. At the age of seventy, he was brought to trial on two very foolish charges that he might easily have answered—at least he might have escaped any serious penalty, if he had but asked for mercy. He scorned to do so. He chose rather to continue his life's work—to lecture his judges as he had lectured the public men on the streets. He thought it unseemly for an

old man to be frightened from his work by any fear of bodily harm. His course exasperated the judges. They condemned him to death—but they probably would have been glad if he had escaped from prison. He had every opportunity to do so. He chose rather to die. As some one has said: "He drank the hemlock, not for love of death, but for love of the law." If the Athenians had decreed his death, then, as a good citizen, he could do no other than be obedient to that decree and assist his executioner. Here we have a very high morality—that of the heroic piety.

Then there is the morality of *Idealism.* Men choose to be "moral" because of their ideals—ideals of love, of justice, of progress. These all demand an unswerving allegiance. What I would have become a law of action for other men, that I must obey myself—and what I would condemn in other men, that I myself must not do. I must let no consideration of personal consequences even momentarily lead me from the service of what I know to be ideally right. The ideal welfare of mankind is the goal I must serve in every act. Here is a very high morality.

To make the matter clearer, let us take the example of five men. Each man needs a very large sum of money. The opportunity occurs to each in precisely the same way to secure the needed money—but it must be secured by a not altogether honorable means. All five men refuse to consider the proposition—and yet the five men are not equally moral in refusing.

Why? Because of the reasons leading to the refusal. One man refuses through inertia, another through fear of what might happen to him in consequence of his act, another because he has a genuine respect for the laws that forbid dishonest dealing, another because his business associates have drilled it into him that "honesty is the best policy," and still another because of certain ideals he seeks to serve and that he knows will be harmed by his dishonesty. Two of the five are not moral at all; one (the business man) is just waking up to morality; and the other two are in a close race for the highest rank.

These are the four conventional motives for moral action. To the four I would add a fifth—and call it the highest. It would be a morality approached through the *Aesthetic.* I would do what others call "right" and "good" because I find within me something that is kin to that "good." In it I find my own fullest life—apart from it but stagnation and death. It is the feeling that an artist might experience in the contemplation of beauty. He loves the beautiful. He serves it without any ulterior purpose. If he tried to explain at all, he would merely say that in the beautiful he found the life of his own soul. This is the highest morality. It is higher than that of idealism—it does not seek even to establish a law for human conduct. Its end is its own self-expression. It transcends all convenience, all piety, all idealism; it despises fear. It is simply a oneness with the right and the good. To sin may be against others—but first of all it is against my own soul; it is a destruction of my own life; it is a hemming in of the soul with something that is utterly foreign. Here we have something that does not spring from religion—but is religion itself.

Marcus Aurelius furnishes us with the best example of the aesthetic attitude toward good and evil. He says:

"Begin the morning by saying to thyself, I shall meet with the busybody, the ungrateful, the arrogant, the deceitful, the envious, the unsocial. All these things happen to them by reason of their ignorance of what is good and evil. But I who have seen the nature of the good that it is beautiful, and of the bad that it is ugly . . . can neither be injured by any of them—for no one can fix on me what is ugly—nor can I be angry with my kinsman, nor hate him."—[*Meditations.*

There is a mysticism in the highest morality. In choosing, the right men are not so much obeying God as they are being God—one with the life divine. It is not I that fall abject at his feet. It is not I that wait but to obey. It is I, too, that command—I that will the good and the beautiful. In the task of accomplishment I am partaker and sharer of a divine strength and courage. The flowers need give us no reason for their climbing sunward. It is their nature. The sunset is not called upon

to declare a reason for its beauty. I cannot believe that the highest morality is under obligation to find a reason why. It is of highest worth just because it is so separate from ulterior purpose.

"As the flowers to the sun we lift our souls
To thee, great God of light."

WHAT O'CLOCK IS IT IN RELIGION?

What o'clock is it in religion? One cannot answer present-day questions until he has determined the hour of the day. Our world moves by the clock. We rise, we eat, we work, we play, we sleep—as the hand on the dial dictates. Even the religious world takes its cue from that hand. It has been doing so for many centuries.

At the corner of Sixth and Marquette Streets stands an old church that I cannot pass with any comfort of mind. Under the base of the spire are painted four clock dials. It is only an imitation clock—but that is why it annoys me. The hands do not move. They stand still, forever pointing to the same hour—eleven o'clock.

I would not feel especially annoyed if this did not strike so close home. I can be liberal enough to let the other fellow think as he pleases. But I realize that the vast majority of men look upon every minister—myself included—as one that crieth: "The eleventh hour is at hand!" That is too much.

If we might retrace our steps a few centuries, we would be able to understand this expression. Eleven o'clock is not the hour just before noon—but the last hour of the day. The expression was first used by religion centuries ago—when the hours of the day were marked by the sundial. The first hour began with the faintest flush of dawn. The eleventh hour was when the shadows began to lengthen and the sun to appear as a great fiery ball dropping below the western horizon. It meant the end of day. All work was at an end.

If we might attach ourselves to a merchant band traveling in those old days to some distant city, we would appreciate the significance of the eleventh hour. We would feel its approach with dread. We would forget the beauty of the sunet. The golden rays might paint the clouds with glory and shoot their flaming arrows into the dark valleys between the hills—but never blind us to the dangers lurking for the traveler on the road at that hour, nor make us forgetful that the city's gates would close, once the sun had made its final dip below the horizon, not to open again for any man till morning. It was an hour of fear. Men left their work and fled to shelter. It was not an hour in which great enterprises were planned or undertaken.

That is what eleven o'clock means in religion—despair. Do you wonder that I will have nothing of this in my religion? I would be ashamed to serve an institution that pictured the world in flight, its work abandoned. We need to shift the hands on that dial and find some more hopeful hour. It is not always sunset. We live more nearly at the dawn of day. That is where I would set the hands of my clock. I believe fervently in humanity and the exalted destiny to be worked out by mankind on this earth. Slowly, but none the less surely, men have been gaining confidence in themselves and the work of their hands. It means the birth of a new day.

Church people have often excused their "neutrality" toward civic questions with the plea that their prime purpose was not to reform the world but to prepare the way for heaven. Such an attitude is quite logical—if one is standing at the close of day, all work done. Shift the hands of the clock and you will have a revolution in the thought and work of churches.

Recall, if you will, that the vast majority of men who pay any attention to religion at all live in an eleventh-hour world. They have more faith in some far-away God than they have in humanity; they believe in praying, not in working. They are content to damn things without doing much to make them better. They call our colleges atheistic, and despise culture as a means to human betterment. The thing we need most of all is faith in life. We must believe in our daily work—and stick to it. It is the only means of carrying humanity forward.

A nobler conception of religion is at hand. We might well call it, "The Religion of the Dawn." For it resembles the attitude of a healthy, normal human being at sunrise—an attitude of vigor, confidence, buoyancy, determination. As a man at daybreak finds things to be done, so here there are problems—big ones. But in the morning a man is not afraid to tackle what is big. Fear has gone; hopelessness has fled.

It is the religion of the dawn. I believe in it. It exalts man. It gives him a new vision of life—he has a part in it. It makes him a better citizen to have passed from that old religion of the eleventh hour and to have glimpsed even for a moment the splendid vision of the early morning hours.

It is a good thing to ask oneself occasionally: "What o'clock is it in religion?" Lucky is he who can answer: "We are at the dawn of day!"

JOSEPH A. KYLE.

The above is quoted from a sermon preached in the First Unitarian Church, Davenport, Iowa.

The Personal and the Impersonal in Religion

By Rev. E. H. Reeman
Minister of the Church in Trenton, N. J.

"And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? There is none good but one, that is, God. Thou knowest the commandments. . . ."

ARE these words a rebuke, or a protest? Is Jesus simply rebuking the address of a man who approaches him with a conventional, but empty form of flattery upon his lips, or is he disavowing a special goodness sincerely ascribed to him? Does he speak in this way, as some have supposed, in order to reveal the questioner's superficiality of ideas to himself, or is it the deliberate intention of Jesus to disclaim a moral perfection that would set him apart from others? Is it possible that while using this language Jesus nevertheless believed himself to share with God that perfection of goodness which his words state belongs only to God?

In the light of the devotion of subsequent Christian ages and the adoration commonly paid to Jesus, it would seem that an affirmative answer to the latter question is the only thing possible. And yet it is obvious that in such a case the reflection of the incident is hardly to the credit of Jesus. In that case, why should he use language, the simplest interpretation of which reads as a disavowal of something he really believed himself to possess? Would it not have been more honest and less confusing if Jesus had said to this young man, "You are quite right in addressing me as 'Good Master,' for I share with God the perfection of His goodness and to know me is eternal life"? In such circumstances as these, it seems to us that ambiguity can hardly be accounted virtuous. It is surely strange that one whose courage enabled him at a later time to die for the truth should on this occasion shrink from telling the truth about himself. If it were the divine intention that the world should ultimately learn that Jesus was "Very God," how can we account for this seeming reluctance on the part of Jesus to bear witness to himself? These are difficulties that must, I think, have presented themselves to every critical mind, and which it is the task of orthodox theology to explain.

It is not, however, upon these purely critical questions that I wish to dwell, but upon a larger subject to which they serve as an introduction. The only apparent purpose of these words which form our text is not less striking than the questions I have suggested. Do you see the direct effect of these words? They turn the attention of this questioner away from the person of Jesus to certain great principles of morality and righteousness with which he had been long familiar, and which had no connection in his mind with the teacher to whom he has come seeking knowledge as to the life which is eternal.

It is true that the last word of Jesus to this man is a call to follow him, but you will notice that this word is spoken only after the attention of the man has been turned back to the foundation principles of the religion in which he had been trained. It is not to a personal discipleship that he is primarily called, but to a devotion to eternal principles and to a practical sacrifice that makes the largest possible demand upon his sincerity and courage.

The passage before us raises the whole question of the personal and the impersonal in religion. How far does the personal element enter into the essentials of religion? Is religion a matter of devotion to a personal leader, or is it a matter of devotion to great impersonal ideals and principles? Is the religious man the disciple of a personal master, or is he the servant of an abstract ideal? Are the personalities of a Christ, a Krishna, a Confucius, a Gautama, a Mahomet, the basic elements in the religions associated with their names, or is there some deeper element that is independent of these names and personalities—some element that would still vitalize the religion if these names were forever obliterated?

In the conventional teaching of orthodox Christianity, a great deal of emphasis has always been laid upon personal devotion as an essential of religion. One might say, indeed, that very frequently personal devotion to Jesus is made the only real point of emphasis. Not only is his life upheld as an example of beauty and goodness, claiming the respect and adoration of men, but his personality is made the object of homage and worship. He claims, it is said, not merely the admiration of the good, but the service of their lives; and a large part of religion is made to consist in allegiance and devotion to his person. The hymnology of the Christian Church abounds with examples of this demand for personal allegiance. Such lines as the following are familiar to all:

"O Jesus, I have promised
To serve Thee to the end;
Be Thou forever near me,
My Master and My Friend."

"Just as I am (Thy love unknown
Has broken every barrier down),
Now to be Thine, yea, Thine alone,
O Lamb of God, I come."

These and many other lines breathing a similar spirit are alive with the instinct of a personal love and devotion, and are expressive of what is commonly regarded as one of the most vital elements in Christian faith. One cannot but admire the loyalty that is often displayed in this devotion, and one would wish to treat with the utmost respect all who exhibit it. At the same time such devotion need not, and ought not deter us from asking whether it is this which really constitutes religion. Is it right, after all, that the measure of a man's personal devotion to Jesus should be made the standard and test of his claim to the name Christian? Grant, if you will for the sake of argument, that all that has ever been claimed for Jesus is true, does it even then necessarily follow that Christianity consists primarily and fundamentally in personal devotion and allegiance to him? Is this personal element the great basis upon which religion stands, or is there not some other foundation which is its real support?

Let us turn for a moment to the teaching of Jesus as it is reflected in the Synoptic writings, and see whether therein the personal element is really made an essential of religion. We shall find of course many passages that it is possible to so interpret. It is unquestionably true that Jesus often bade men follow him. Such passages as, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me" are familiar to us all and flash at once to the mind. But do these passages necessarily contain the substance of religion, and is it absolutely necessary to suppose that their only possible reference is to a personal discipleship? May it not be that even in such instances Jesus was aiming to recruit disciples for the ideals he himself served rather than disciples whose only bond of union consisted in their allegiance to his own person? May it not be that his intention was to turn their love not to himself but to the things which he loved and served? Such a supposition is at least worthy of consideration and ought not to be dismissed until we have viewed it in the light of the main body of the Jesus teaching.

Is it not a fact that, striking as the New Testament calls to discipleship are, they occupy, after all, only a very small space in the sum total of the Jesus teaching? In the gospel of Matthew there are three chapters which are entirely given up to sayings attributed to Jesus. I suppose it would be fair to say that these three chapters present us with the fullest and most representative collection of the sayings of Jesus to be found in the New Testament.

What do we find when we turn to this collection of sayings? We find that in the main it is composed of sayings of a practical and ethical kind, do we not? In the whole collection there is hardly a single passage that can be strictly named a call to personal discipleship. On the contrary, great space is given to a description of the blessedness of those who practice certain moral and spiritual virtues. The poor in spirit, the pure in heart, the persecuted for righteousness' sake, the peacemakers, the merciful, together with such as hunger and thirst after righteousness, are extolled as the blessed of earth. The perfection of a Heavenly Father's love is

uplifted as the pattern of human conduct, and men are urged to act as his children. A simple, childlike trust in this Heavenly Parent is likewise enjoined as an essential part of true righteousness; and to nothing is more emphasis given than to the necessity of seeking before all things the kingdom of God and his righteousness.

It is to such things as these—the things of which Jesus was the preacher and prophet—that the attention of men is called. The true greatness of a preacher consists not in his ability to win affection and attention for himself, but in his power to so present his truth that his hearers will lose sight of the preacher in the beauty of that to which he is the witness bearer. If the greatness of Jesus is seen in anything, it is surely in the clearness of his testimony to that truth of which he was the servant, and in his unflinching fidelity to its demands. A careful study of the Synoptic writings will, I believe, abundantly prove that the point of emphasis in the instances we have noted is the central point of emphasis throughout.

The call of Jesus, as I understand it, is far more a call to the service of eternal principles of righteousness and truth than it is a call to a worship and love of his own person. The worship of a name, however noble, is a fetich; the service of truth and righteousness alone is religion. The ideals of religion are abstract ideals in the sense that they are independent of concrete form and individual example. It is not the personality of Jesus that invests truth with beauty, and goodness with glory. On the contrary, the glory of goodness and the beauty of truth are the secret of the adorableness of Jesus. The fundamental elements of religion would be the same if Jesus had never existed, and truth and goodness would still claim our homage. His life adds nothing to their lustre, nor can any life take aught therefrom. There is a beauty and truth underlying all things, and eternal in character, that transcends all personality, and which the purest personality reflects but dimly. Worship of this truth and beauty is religion, and no homage that we pay to good and great persons can ever take its place.

The mistake of conventional theology is that it so often substitutes ecclesiastical loyalty, creedal accuracy, devotion to a name and a church, for the worship of that eternal Truth and Good, our vision of which must of necessity be constantly broadening, and no one view of which can be regarded as final or complete. If the worship of a person be once admitted as an element in religion, then there are many who will claim that Jesus has no exclusive right to our homage. And their claim is not one that can be set aside easily. The history of the Christian Church offers abundant evidence of the way in which the emphasis of the personal element in religion tends towards sectarian division and party strife. Men who unite in paying homage to the name of Jesus are not united as to the particular merits which entitle Jesus to their homage. By one he is worshiped on account of a peerless perfection of moral character; by another on account of a mystical and metaphysical identity of nature with Deity. By one on account of his birth; by another on account of his death.

But eliminate the personal element, and we find that it is the same great truth and beauty that men everywhere adore. The moral grandeur of the self-sacrifice of which Jesus is the symbol to the orthodox believer is the object of my homage as much as his, though for me it is too vast a thing to identify with a single personality, even when the personality is that of a Jesus. The goodness which the orthodox believer claims belonged only to him is a goodness before which we all bow, though for some of us it is a goodness that shines through all things.

Christ, Krishna, Confucius, Gautama, Mahomet, these are indeed great names, to which we do well to pay tribute; but the fact remains that to those of us who are living today they are names only. They may be associated with many things we love and do well to love, but they are the names of persons so remote from our own times that only imagination can clothe them with flesh. Why should we then focus our worship upon these names and persons, or upon any one of them, when the eternal things to which they bore witness are in our midst, manifesting themselves, revealing their beauty, directing the tide of human

affairs as surely now as in the days of long ago? While the sun still shines, and the tide still flows, and the stars still light the sky; while beauty still blooms to brighten the earth; while the truth is still spoken; while the good still live; and while men still lay down their lives for others, why turn back to the altars of antiquity to pay our homage to eternal reality? Why localize in a person, or in a place, that which has been from the beginning, and will be to the end—universal?

I do not deny that the personal element in religion has had its value for many souls, nor do I deny that there may still be those to whom it is precious, but at best it can be no more than the scaffolding to the building. The time will surely come when the great temple of religion will stand complete, dedicated to the worship of eternal truth and reality, to the Spirit that moveth in all things, from whom alone the greatest draw breath, and to whom alone belongeth the worship and praise of creation. Meanwhile, the personal element in religion can have value only as it serves to render easier the service of impersonal ideals. In so far as it enables a man to look beyond a person to a truth, it may have value, but it is always the truth we must worship and not the person. Indeed, it is only fidelity to what may be called abstract principles that makes real personal discipleship possible. The true disciple can name his lord master only as he pledges himself to his lord's cause. He becomes a disciple, not because he loves a man, but because he loves a cause. The man and the cause may be very closely related in his thought, but unless the cause is greater than the man discipleship amounts to little. When the soldier fights for his flag, it is not the strip of silk or fabric that fires his courage; it is the honor and dignity of his country, of which the flag is the temporary and visible symbol. When the loyal patriot of a monarchial country cries, "God save the King," it is not of the reigning occupant of the throne that he is thinking in particular, but of an office which for him is the synonym of good government. The crowd which in one breath murmurs in mournful whisper, "The King is dead," is the same crowd that in the next breath cries with jubilation, "Long live the King." The particular person upon the throne matters comparatively little; it is the throne itself and what it represents that is the subject of patriotism. The person is important only in so far as he represents something that is impersonal. It is not otherwise in religion. The Christ and the Church are but symbol figures, of value only in that they focus for us eternal verities. The reality of religion is not dependent upon its great personalities, but upon truths and verities that are an integral part of life.

The ultimate test of the Christian religion is not whether Jesus was this, that, or the other thing, but whether life has a spiritual origin and purpose. Do I make myself clear? The truth of religion is grounded, not in individual personalities, however exalted, but in the essential and eternal facts of life. In a sense, you and I are just as much an evidence of the reality of religion as a Jesus or a Confucius. The great witness to the reality of religion and the things religion represents is found in the deeper things of your spiritual experience and mine as surely as it is found anywhere. If it were not so, neither Jesus nor any other could mean anything to us.

To what, then, are you paying homage? Is it to the name of a man idealized by the ages—a majestic figure in very truth? Or is it to an eternal Truth, and an eternal Good, that underlie the life of all the ages, that shape the course of human destiny, that are manifest wherever the breath of life is drawn? If it is to the former, then, no matter how sincere your homage, it is mistaken. If it is to the latter, then your worship is religion, your homage rightly paid, and you are a true disciple of Jesus—because a worshiper with him of the eternal majesty of the Highest.

The Meadville Unitarian Conference will meet with the Unitarian Church, Buffalo, N. Y., March 26, 27 and 28. The Young People's Meeting will be held on Monday at 4 p. m., and the Alliance Session on Tuesday afternoon. The business session will be Tuesday forenoon. Addresses and consideration of Conference matters will occupy the other hours.

HENRY T. VECREST,
Meadville, Pa. *Secretary.*

Constructive Liberalism

By Rev. J. Morris Evans
Minister of the Church in Dayton, Ohio.

LIBERALISM presents many phases and undergoes many changes during its development. Its earliest form is that of protest and revolt against authority. It represents a refusal, a refusal to be bound by formulas of the past, because of a desire to freely handle the experience of the present. It is a protest against creedal finalities usurping the place of live religion. Liberalism is a revolt against making an explanation equivalent to the reality explained. And this revolt is not only against the sectarian organization of religion, it is also a revolt against the sectarian interpretation of religion. A revolt is a blow; a protest is but a gesture.

Another phase of liberalism is that of devotion to and propaganda of positive knowledge. It seeks to give people correct methods in thinking, and helps them face logical results. In this form liberalism mediates the contemporary rationale. It is sort of an inspector, seeking to bring religion into alignment with modern intellectual endeavors. It aims to unify life in a thought form. Too frequently it seems to be satisfied when it has discredited old forms and authorities. But negations provoke nothing but opposition. A correct view is important, but the thing itself is vital. A picture of her boy is of interest to a mother, but the boy himself is necessity. Our best pictures are but feeble transcriptions. The realities are vital. Liberalism cannot remain with protests, nor live on revolts, nor subsist on views. It must get through to living reality. In fact, its protests are but refusals to accept anything else, and its intellectual clarifications are but reasons for its urgent onward trend. This onward trend is creative endeavor, which is the emphatic note of liberalism. It is positive activity which the uninformed fails to realize in estimating our Unitarian habit of mind. And yet, this is the major affirmation in our confidence and attitude.

True liberalism is constructive. It involves a change from passive intellect to creative will. Its big words are—desires; values; satisfactions. These are dynamic words. They indicate a constructive attitude, and ideal ends. Liberalism assimilates the world to itself; while conservatism assimilates itself to the world. The big product of liberalism is novelty, originality. The big product of conservatism is docility, passive acceptance. Mass docility is the human inertia which impedes progress. We have examples of this mass docility in education, industry, civics, and religion. In education, conformity is the governing principle. In spite of the pleading of expert psychologists that the child is not an empty adult, the system of cram and drill prevails. In industry, mass docility is characterized by regulation. In civics, we register—we do not regenerate. Civic docility is the opportunity of the exploiter. He capitalizes our timidities for his own ends. In religion, docility is the preservative of authorities. One dynamic heave topples the security of credulity. One creative urge floods life with value.

Constructive liberalism offers us a new valuation. Man is no longer a creature, he is a creator. He feels solidly at home in the world. He does not believe that he exists to live out a few implications, nor to imitate a few excellences. He knows that he is free to create; to initiate precedents as well as follow them. If told that he is here simply to help his fellow man, he asks what is fellow man here for. Life and man have always had a career outside and beyond their past achievements.

Herein liberalism joins issue with Christianity in treating life as a hearty adventure. In this bracing atmosphere, the man whose past is soiled and compromised dares to remake it. He realizes the truth which Jesus was never tired of teaching, that human nature did not so much need a change as a chance. And when it is given a chance there is resilience enough in its

native impulse to renew its communion with God. By this fellowship with God, man attains a definite degree of independent masterhood, not a mere imitation, or mere routine drudgery, but the creation of new satisfactions, a new order, and which attests its reality by its capacity to generate fresh creative processes.

It is this desire to bring in a new social order, to ventilate life, and this passion for a Christianized community which reveals the message of modern liberalism. And it is this constructive message which characterizes the life and activity of our Unitarian churches today. And so we invite men into a kind of participation in creative responsibility, to cooperate with the unseen God who backs us up.

The Quarter-Hour Communion

(*Un quart d'heure pour Dieu*)

Conducted by DR. FRANK CARLETON DOAN, author of *Religion and the Modern Mind.*

Readers of this Department are requested to spend at least a quarter-hour each day communing with God or the Highest they can find. For membership blanks and further information concerning the "Communion," write to the Editor of this Department at his home address, Summit, N. J.

Prayer: Its Uses and Abuses.

I.

Most thinking men and women, it would seem, have left off praying altogether these days. Talk with them about it and you will discover that they have given up the practice because of the many abuses they find in the prayers of their less thoughtful fellows. Here, for example, is a man who prays, loud and long, for things he really has no eternal use for—things that turn to ashes the moment he gets his grasping hands on them. Everyone knows the type: people who would be better off if they were uncomfortable are the very ones who pray for the creature comforts of life. They pray for the good things of life when they ought to be taking no thought for the morrow, what they shall eat, or what drink, or what wear withal. I don't wonder that thoughtful men and women have taken offense at this kind of praying.

Again, a man's prayer is, often enough, a mark of indolence on his part. He is forever asking his God to come down and do the things he is too lazy to get up and do himself. He prays for rain when a more energetic man would get busy on some irrigation scheme which would save the whole countryside from future droughts; for bread when he ought to be out earning it in the sweat of his brow. And so on. Everyone knows this type, too.

Just the other day I read an incident that admirably illustrates the thinking man's reaction against this indolent spirit of prayer. A coastwise ship was caught in a storm at sea and was about to be driven upon the rocks. It had been a bitterly cold night and the ship's anchor was frozen fast to the deck. The captain and his crew were working desperately to cast the anchor overboard. Meanwhile, several of the passengers were forward, down on their knees praying. Finally, the captain in a fit of exasperation cried out to them, "For God's sake quit praying, and spit on your hands and help us loosen this —— anchor and get it overboard." That's the way many a thoughtful, robust, resourceful man feels when he hears weakling men at their prayers—like saying, "For God's sake quit praying, and get up and help the Great Captain in his hard task of keeping the storm-tossed ship of humanity off the rocks!"

A reliable rule for any thinking man to follow is never to ask God, or any other human being for that matter, to do for him what he can possibly do for himself.

And then, too, men's prayers are apt to be too utterly selfish, always asking something for themselves: that God out of his abundance may supply their little wants, out of his infinite heart may comfort them in their personal sorrows, or remit to them the consequences of their sin, or folly, or ignorance. All this

with little thought of the great, teeming humanity outside their little narrow sphere—humanity with its world-old and world-wide needs, and sorrows, and sins. Self-seeking, self-pitying prayers! No wonder the thoughtful man will have nothing of them.

No wonder either that such prayers go unanswered. If my child comes to me with a selfish request, wanting something which by its very nature cannot include every other member of our little family, I refuse it, of course. To grant such a desire would be not only unfair to the others but also injurious to the child. So with us and the Great Father-Spirit we call God. We of his great family must consider and understand that in all our ways and in all our prayers, we must be ever mindful of the rights and needs of every member of his great household of humanity.

Another thing about prayer that causes the thinking man to offend is the fact that people, for the most part, pray only in the hour of some great extremity. A man who hasn't given a thought to God for years and years will go down on his knees when some great disaster suddenly overtakes him. So long as it is smooth sailing, he lolls around indolently and thoughtlessly in his easy deck-chair, tucked comfortably away in steamer rugs. But when the storm is upon him and the ship is sinking, then he suddenly remembers that there is a God who is reputed to be a Father. And his long-silent soul breaks out in awkward, unaccustomed prayer.

All of which is perfectly natural and human. But it isn't quite fair to God, if I may say it. When a man's habitual waywardness has at last lost him in the wilderness; when his sin and folly have at last cursed him with some incurable disease; when at last he sees coming the blow which his own indolence has brought upon him—really, now, it isn't quite fair, is it, to ask God to show him the way out, to cure him, to ward off the blow from his bowed head? It isn't fair to go to God or to any other human relation only when you are in some scrape and want his help.

Here again the human analogy applies. My child comes to me in the hour of his great need. And of course I help him with his problems and do all I can to heal his bruises. If he has sinned I forgive him and tell him to go his way and sin no more. All that, too, is natural and human. But the hours of deepest joy to me and to the child, too, I am sure, are the hours when the little one comes to me throwing his arms about my neck not because he wants my help to solve some problem, or to kiss some hurt, but just because he loves me and finds joy in father's presence. So with us and God. We who have joined this "Quarter-Hour Communion" shall find, if we haven't already, that the quarter-hours of deepest communion are those in which we go to the Great Father-Spirit, not with any personal problem or personal hurt at all, but freely, gladly, eagerly, for no reason whatever except that we find joy and peace in the Father's presence.

II.

When I consider these abuses and how characteristic they are of the prayers of thoughtless men and women today, I don't wonder that it is hard to induce any fair-minded, square-souled man to pray. But these are the abuses and not the uses of prayer. They don't belong to the nature of prayer. As a matter of fact, you don't find them in the prayers of any of the great souls of the past. Read the prayers that have come down to us through the ages, and you will find them wholly free from these irrational and unworthy abuses. Jesus, St. Augustine, Thomas a Kempis, Tauler—you don't find these great souls praying for rain or for release from the consequences of their own sin and folly. You don't find them asking God to give them the creature comforts of life, or to do for them what they were too indolent to do for themselves, or to ward off some disaster that had caught them unprepared. No, their prayers are the generous outpourings of great souls in a natural and human communion with the Great Spirit of which they knew themselves to be a living part. Often enough they pray against their own temporal interests, against their own weaker selves. They are after nothing for themselves. All they ask is strength, fidelity, and wisdom with which to serve their kind. Indeed, their constant prayer is that they may give up all their selfish ends, and desires, and passions, and devote themselves, body and soul, to the great cause

of humanity which is God's only cause on earth.

Any thinking man, if only he have the right purpose and the right spirit in him, can pray like this. Indeed, these great pray-ers of the past have set down two perfectly exact and simple rules by which any man may learn to pray in the same spirit that animated them. First, you must get very quiet. You must withdraw "into the silence." Get away from all outward noises if you can. But, in any case, get away from all inward noises, the clamor and confusion of your own mind. "Be quiet and know that I am God"—that is the prime rule of all true praying. Then, second, in this quiet and peace of mind, this holy of holies of your own soul, you are to meditate only upon the eternal things. All your personal passions, and cares, and problems, and ambitions, you must have left outside. Now you are alone with God, thinking with him of the great problems, and wants, and cares of humanity of which he is the living, struggling soul. You and he are one; he in you and you in him. You are clearing your conscience and opening your soul to the Great Spirit of justice, and righteousness, and love, even God's Spirit, which is forever at work in the soul of humanity. In that quarter-hour anyway, you are God's and God is yours. You and he have no differences between you. Your spirit and his are perfectly interfused. For that quarter-hour anyway, you are as just, and righteous, and loving as he is; for you have taken all of his justice, and righteousness, and love into your infinite human soul. Who can say that your prayer hasn't been answered? Or that you have broken any rules, or in any way abused the purpose or spirit of prayer?

Still men ask me (you've no idea how often) whether a man by praying can really get anything. I invariably reply that a man can get everything by praying—everything he ought to want; everything he really needs. Like all the great souls who have truly prayed in the past, a man today can get strength, and courage, and wisdom, and serenity, and joy, and peace. *He can get victory.* He can get God!

Prayer rightly understood and rightly used restores life to its rightful emphasis. It makes God emphatic. It puts God in the center of the soul and all things else out in the circumference where they belong. Take time each day to pray—a quarter-hour will be enough. Get quiet and know that God is God. Turn your attention resolutely against all the personal cares and problems that keep knocking so insistently at the outer door of your life; entertain in the center of your soul only the things that abide, the things that concern you and all men as parts of God's great soul of humanity on earth. Do this for a quarter-hour each day; and you've no idea what mighty changes will be wrought in the whole purpose and spirit of your life. Things which now seem almighty important will become laughably insignificant. Things in which now you take the deepest interest you will see as the shallow things they really are. Instead of living and planning for the day and for your own self, you will be irresistibly moved to live and plan for all mankind forever.

ANNOUNCEMENT.

In the next issue of the ADVANCE, the Editor of this Department expects to reply to at least a few of the many interesting letters he has been receiving. Meanwhile he will be glad to receive further questions and suggestions from his readers. Speaking of suggestions, how many readers of this Department have seen Fosdick's *The Meaning of Prayer?* It is one of the few really helpful books that have been written on this question of prayer. It may be a bit too traditional in its terminology to suit the advanced readers of the ADVANCE, but just the same it is a sound and wholesome defense of prayer against many of the objections of the modern thinking man.

We go along in our easy way, with nothing in particular to do or bear beyond ordinary duties and burdens; and then there is nothing particular in our nature. But suddenly some great trouble comes, and breaks up the old monotony. And then, though we feel sore and savage about it, towards the Providence that is above us, we are drawn towards those nearest to us with a new tenderness and trust. The strands that bind us are better: we are better men and women.

ROBERT COLLYER.

WESTERN CONFERENCE NEWS

The outstanding features of interest in the Middle West for the month of February were provided by the visits of Rev. John Haynes Holmes of New York and Dr. S. M. Crothers of Cambridge. Mr. Holmes came out to fill engagements with the State Universities of Wisconsin, Iowa, and Nebraska. In connection with these engagements, he took part in series of meetings at Chicago, Cincinnati, Milwaukee, and Lincoln, Neb. He also spoke in our churches at Madison, Davenport, and Iowa City. Dr. Crothers spoke at Cincinnati, Indianapolis, Memphis (in the Southern District), Milwaukee, Menomonie, St. Paul, Minneapolis, Duluth, Evanston, Chicago, Cleveland, Canton, and Youngstown, conducting series of meetings at Milwaukee and Chicago. It is perhaps too soon to check up on the results of these visits, as our copy goes to the printer when Dr. Crothers is a little more than half through his circuit in our district. Also the deeper and more lasting results will become apparent only in the future. Suffice it to say that the immediate effect was a distinct quickening both of interest and of the sense of responsibility for our cause.

Ohio.

The campaign of liberal evangelism held under the auspices of the Cincinnati church, beginning February 4 and continuing through February 11, was so successful in all its details as to exceed the hopes of the most enthusiastic supporter. .

At the opening service, Dr. Crothers preached to a large congregation on the subject, "The Modern Man's Search After God." Beginning Monday noon, two services were held daily throughout the week, the noon services at the Union Central Building, which is located in the very heart of the business district, the evening meetings being held in the church on Reading Road.

Many conditions conspired against a large attendance at these meetings, but in spite of this the numbers were highly gratifying. The numbers varied from eighty-five at the opening noon meeting to 250 at the closing noon service, the average attendance at these noon services coming up well towards the 200-mark. The evening services were not so largely attended, but were highly satisfactory in affording an opportunity to many people to come into more intimate contact with the exponents of our liberal faith.

The publicity which attended these meetings was altogether gratifying. Newspaper announcements approaching the campaign from different points of view were issued for a period of six weeks preceding the campaign itself, and during the week a considerable amount of advertising space was purchased in the newspapers, in addition to highly satisfactory accounts of the meetings themselves. This feature of the work was conducted by F. Stanley Howe in an altogether admirable and efficient manner.

The visit of Mr. Holmes on Saturday and Sunday, the closing days of the campaign, was one of great stimulus to the forces of liberal religion in Cincinnati. In addition to the noon meeting, Mr. Holmes spoke before a large audience at the Cincinnati City Club, at luncheon, on the subject, "From Absolutism to Democracy in Industry." He preached on "The Religion of Tomorrow" in the church on Sunday morning, to an audience which completely filled the building, with many persons standing throughout the service.

A large amount of literature was distributed at both the down town meetings and those at the church, and a long list of names of persons who expressed themselves as being sympathetic and interested in our faith was obtained. It also appears that one of the most valuable and significant results of this campaign is the new sense of responsibility which has developed among the members of the church themselves with regard to the position which this church ought to occupy in the life of Cincinnati.

The experience has been self-revealing to a very high degree. Plans for following up this campaign are already on foot, and a thorough reorganization of the parish is under consideration.

At the First Unitarian Church, Toledo, the program of Pleasant Sunday Afternoon Meetings, begun last winter, is continuing this year with great success. The minister reads modern plays of ethical and social significance on these occasions, there is always music, and the Woman's Alliance serves tea. These meetings are greatly enjoyed and very profitable, intellectually and socially. The women of the church have had their work for the Red Cross recognized as the best among the churches in the city, both as to quality and quantity. The Wayside Sermons, posted weekly on the bulletin board in front of the church, continue to create great interest, favorable comments coming to the minister from many sources. The congregation has grown steadily during the winter. Some of the sermon topics which have created most interest this winter have dealt with valuable new books dealing with social and spiritual movements and conditions, and with matters growing out of the war. Sermons dealing with President Wilson's "World Peace" message and "The Duty of the Hour for Americans" have awakened great interest.

The minister continues to relate the church

to many civic movements. The young people of the church have just joined the National Young People's Religious Union. The Alliance is to hold a "Neighborhood Meeting" on Friday, March 2, when we expect delegates and visitors from the nearest Unitarian churches. Other activities of the church go on as usual.

Michigan.

The event of special interest recently in the Detroit church was the visit of Thomas Mott Osborne, who addressed and delighted the Young People's Religious Union at a Sunday supper attended by nearly fifty young people, including delegations from the Ann Arbor and Toledo branches. Following this social gathering, Mr. Osborne spoke on "The New Penology" to a packed church, many persons being turned away, an interesting feature of the address being the introduction of one of Mr. Osborne's "pals" from Sing Sing, a former pickpocket, who spoke of the profound change that had been wrought upon the prisoners by the rational treatment accorded them and by the influence of the warden's Mutual Welfare League. The next day our distinguished guest was entertained by the Unitarian Club, the men's church organization, at the Detroit Athletic Club, where again he made a deep impression by his personality and principles. It is no accident that Mr. Osborne was brought up in the liberal school of religious thought, for the new penology is a practical application of the new theology.

Mr. Shippen made a flying visit to Cincinnati on the occasion of the week of liberal evangelism in that city, speaking at an evening meeting on "Education Versus Redemption."

The Woman's Alliance has mothered a Child Study Class that is drawing together some of the most thoughtful women of the city, their biweekly meetings being very helpful and stimulating to perplexed mothers.

Dr. Ali Kuli Khan, Commissioner General of Persia, occupied the pulpit, Sunday evening, February 18, speaking on "The Latest Manipulation of the Oversoul."

The Camp Fire Girls are planning to adopt a French war orphan, arranging a tea to raise money for the purpose.

To offset a series of three sermons on "The Psychology of Religion," the young people have announced, and are practicing for, a minstrel show to be given early in March.

Illinois.

The Unitarian churches of Chicago united in arranging a series of three meetings on February 7, 8, and 9, at Lincoln Centre, Rev. John Haynes Holmes speaking at each meeting. His first subject was "The Religion of Tomorrow," which he held must be scientific, predominantly ethical, and interpreted in terms of social reconstruction. "The church must be a community church. The private chapel for the private business of private souls' salvation must give way to a community institution dedicated to the common work of social salvation, social reconstruction." On the second evening his topic was "The International Mind." He pictured the characteristics of the international mind in regard to the present war as (1) a refusal to believe that all the blame is to be placed on any one people, (2) sympathy for all the peoples involved and a clear distinction between peoples and their governments, together with the realization that in this war all peoples believe themselves to be fighting on the defensive, and (3) a real neutrality not only political, but spiritual and moral. The international mind refuses to believe the success of either side in the present struggle is essential to human liberty or the progress of civilization. He further stated that this international mind will not be neutral in the great struggle between good and evil, but that the battle line of this struggle is not the boundary line between nations, but between principles within each nation. The international mind is dedicated, not to material, but to spiritual good.

His third topic was "From Monarchy to Democracy in Industry." He stated that the task of social reconstruction was the immediate business of the church of God, the organization of the world on a basis of democratic government founded upon the teachings of Jesus with regard to the divine nature of every human soul. He held that just as politically the world has seen a movement from monarchy to democracy, so in industry we are on the way from a condition in which one man or small group of men can control and dictate the terms to one in which all workers shall have a direct voice and where the final decision shall rest with the people themselves and not with their rulers.

At the close of each address, there was an opportunity for questions, which led to a further development of his position by Mr. Holmes. Despite the inhospitable weather and the intense anxieties of war and rumors of war, the attendance at these meetings was encouragingly good.

In connection with these evening meetings, there was held a series of ministerial conferences during the afternoons. Some twenty ministers took part in the discussions, seven different denominations being represented. A sufficient number of laymen and laywomen were in attendance to tax the capacity of the lecture room in which the meetings were held. These meetings centered in topics rather than in speakers, no speakers having been announced and all having an equal opportunity for a hearing. The topics dis-

cussed were as follows: "What Means the Apparent Decline in the Influence of the Church?" "The Significance of New Cults and Modern Substitutes for the Church;" "The Church and Social Control;" "Is a Rational Revivalism Possible?" "The Duty of the Churches in the Face of the Present Religious Situation."

While the Unitarian Churches of Chicago acted as sponsors for these meetings, All Souls' Church in Abraham Lincoln Centre served as host, not only providing the place of meeting, but also entertaining Mr. Holmes and serving a fine dinner on Thursday for all those in attendance upon the meetings who cared to come.

At this writing, the visit of Dr. Crothers is yet to come. He will speak at Lincoln Centre on the evenings of February 25 and 26 and at a dinner at the City Club on the evening of the 27th.

The Alton church, under its new leader, Mr. Holloway, has instituted a People's Forum. The speakers announced are George E. O'Dell of New York on "The Spiritual Message of Mankind to America;" S. K. Ratcliffe of England on "The Work of Democracy;" and Algernon S. Crapsey of Albany on "The Passing of Civilization." Other speakers with topics to be later announced are Percival Chubb of St. Louis; Frank Waller Allen of Springfield, Ill.; Roger N. Baldwin of St. Louis; Alvah W. Taylor of Columbia; and Mary S. Bulkeley of St. Louis.

At Quincy, the pastor, Rev. Lyman M. Greenman, is doing a daring thing by devoting the Sunday mornings of February and March to a consideration of the Italian poet Dante and his great work, "The Divine Comedy." He is supplementing this by a series of Thursday evening lectures and readings which parallel and illustrate the Sunday morning course.

The church has recently printed a sermon of Mr. Greenman's on "Salvation by Character."

Wisconsin.

Liberal Evangelism and the Recruiting Campaign in Milwaukee.—Nearly a year ago, the members of the Milwaukee church came to the decision that even though the church was over sixty years of age, it was still the embodiment of a pioneer enterprise and its chief function should be one of militant propaganda in a city in which less than two out of five of its 450,000 people ever even intend to pass over the threshold of a church.

Consequently, the objective was to recruit to its membership all persons in the city who were actually responsive to the high spiritual and social purposes of the church, who at the same time recoiled from the dogmas or the symbolism, from the method or from the traditions, by which other churches were held.

Gradually, lists of prospective recruits were assembled to whom letters and literature were sent. The first test of the value of this mailing list was made in an invitation to attend the first two in a series of services in the interest of liberal evangelism. Rev. John Haynes Holmes preached on two successive week day nights to a crowded house each night. Hundreds of tracts were distributed, new names of interested people were received, and great enthusiasm was aroused among the old members and new friends. The number of new faces has been greater each Sunday than in many years. The Campaign Committee is sure that it is learning many valuable lessons each week, and has constantly greater commendations for the program of patient, assiduous, constructive work upon which it is launched. Rev. S. M. Crothers will speak on three evenings in the third week of February.

On February 11, Rev. Ernest C. Smith, Secretary of the Western Conference, occupied the pulpit at Madison, thus enabling the pastor, Mr. Gilmore, to make a long-contemplated visit to Menomonie, where no services have been held since fall, when Mr. Niles resigned after twenty-three years of service. Rev. John Haynes Holmes gave the address at a university convocation on February 8, speaking in the evening at the Unitarian church.

Iowa.

The February calendar for the Davenport church announces sermon subjects as follows: "On Common Ground;" an address on "New Civic Spirit," by Clinton R. Woodruff, Secretary of the National Municipal League; "The Game of Make-Believe;" "Saintship" — "Saintship is not innocence, it is conquest." The study class continued its study of the dramas of George Bernard Shaw. The young people held two dances during the month in Unity Hall, and on Friday, February 16, had a joint meeting of the Men's Club and the Woman's Alliance, Rev. John Haynes Holmes speaking on "The Causes of Poverty."

At Iowa City, the sermon topics for February were: "Do We Need Religion?" "Do We Need the Church?" "Do We Need the Preacher?" "Do We Need Billy Sunday?" At the Young People's meetings, A. H. Krappe spoke on "Germany in War Times;" Miss Clara Goldberg on "The Adamson Law;" Prof. H. L. Dodge gave an illustrated lecture on "The St. Lawrence River;" and Rev. John Haynes Holmes of New York gave one of his characteristic addresses.

The housing campaign at Des Moines is progressing rapidly. A tenement house bill has been introduced in the legislature by Representative Weaver of Des Moines, which gives cities full power with reference to the construction of new buildings as well as re-

pairs, and even for the destruction of unsuitable buildings. The bill seems to be generally favored, and it is very probable that it will pass both houses of the legislature promptly, receive the governor's signature, and become a law.

The Housing Commission has secured the services of Robert E. Todd of Springfield, Mass., to conduct a housing survey in the city of Des Moines. The work will begin February 26, and will be completed in about eight weeks. With full and accurate information as to just what the conditions are, this community will understand the importance and magnitude of the task before it. A preliminary investigation revealed the fact that in some respects the conditions in Des Moines are as bad as in the largest cities of the country.

From the beginning, the local church has stood back of the housing movement. The first constructive steps towards organization and united action followed a service in which Mr. Reese spoke to the officials of the state, city, and charity and social workers. The mayor appointed Mr. Reese as Chairman of the new Housing Commission, and the former mayor, James R. Hanna, was chosen as the head of the Citizens Board to assist and cooperate with the Commission. During the past week, Mr. Reese has spoken on the housing question at the Free Synagogue and also to the City Union of Mothers' Clubs, the Congregational Club, and the Divinity Students at Drake University.

Unity Circle has devoted the greater part of its program this year to a study of the works of those writers who have won the Nobel prizes. Every book review has been followed with the keenest interest and inspired a general reading of the works of these authors. The women of this club recently staged a beautiful little suffrage farce, entitled, "Jonathan's Nightshirt," and invited the members of the legislature to attend their meeting. The play was conducted under the direction of Mrs. Fred Hunter.

Unity Church of Humboldt continues in the renewed spirit and progressive activity heretofore reported since the beginning of the present church year under the ministry of Rev. Charles C. Williams. On Sunday, the 11th, the minister gave us a strong, stirring, patriotic sermon, thoroughly alive to the burning issues of the present day, upon "America and Its Place in the Federation of Nations." The house was well filled to hear this rousing appeal to sane, earnest, reasoning, impartial considerations of real patriotism demanded by the pending crisis.

Another sermon recently given and worthy of special mention was upon the topic, "The Young Man's Pride." This was addressed especially to young men, but as one of the hearers, seventy-five years of age, said to this writer as he passed from the church, "It was good enough for one of any age or condition." "Who Is My Neighbor?" is another subject recently dealt with in a very interesting manner well adapted to quicken the spirit of brotherhood and good will.

Our sermons all deal with live issues with practical adaptation to daily life—messages of uplift and character building. The people show appreciation of these discourses by largely increased attendance.

Nebraska.

At Lincoln, the sermon subjects for February were as follows: "The Most Powerful Appeal for the Religious Life;" "Education and Something More;" "The New Order and the Old Order." On the last Sunday of the month, Rev. Robert F. Leavens of Omaha occupied the pulpit on exchange with the pastor. Rev. John Haynes Holmes of New York spent four days in Lincoln, giving addresses before the Nebraska Peace Society, the Lincoln Open Forum, the Men's Club of All Souls' Church, and the Lincoln Social Service Club. On February 20, he spoke at the university convocation, his subject being, "The International Mind."

Kansas.

Rev. E. B. Backus has resigned the pastorate of the Lawrence church to take effect on February 15. He leaves Lawrence to take up the work laid down by his father, Rev. W. M. Backus, at Erie, Pa.

Director's Meeting.

By general consent of the Board to make possible the attendance of Prof. Brooks, the stated meeting of the Board of Directors of the Western Unitarian Conference was held on January 29 instead of February 5, at the Unitarian headquarters in Chicago, at 2 o'clock in the afternoon. Present: Mesdames Lynn and Mann, Messrs. Brooks, Foote, Greenman, Harrison, Hawley, Hosmer, Stanwood, and Smith. The records of the last meeting were read and approved. The Treasurer made a brief report, showing the condition of the treasury and the amount of business done by the headquarters in sale of S. S. materials, this being nearly fifty per cent better than in the corresponding period of the preceding year. An invitation to hold the next annual meeting of the Conference at Des Moines, Iowa, was read. It was voted unanimously to accept the invitation and hold the meeting during the week of May 6–12. It was further voted to empower the President and Secretary to appoint a committee of three to arrange the program for the annual meeting. Adjourned at 4 o'clock.

Ernest Charles Smith,
Secretary.

NEW ENGLAND NEWS LETTER

Many a visitor to the rooms at 25 Beacon Street both from far and near will miss the kindly and genial face of George W. Fox, who died in his Dorchester home the 12th of February. Mr. Fox was a kinsman of the noted Dr. Hodge, son and grandson of well-known Unitarian ministers, for sixty-four years an officer of the American Unitarian Association, and very widely esteemed by our ministers because he first befriended them. His records of the Association's affairs which he kept for many years looked like copperplate, they were so perfectly done. Through inheritance and activity, his life was completely identified with our Unitarian interests, and therein he found his greatest satisfactions. We knew him as the perfect gentleman; genial, faithful, moderate, poiseful, kindly. A splendid characterization of Mr. Fox by Dr. S. A. Eliot appeared in the *Register* of February 15.

The big thing lately in the Hub's Unitarianism was the mass meeting held recently in Symphony Hall with an overflow in Horticultural Hall, another in Dr. Hale's auditorium, and still another in the spacious vestry of the same church. Fully five thousand people took part in the demonstration. In each place the singing was led by large choruses of young people, and great joy and interest were evident. Rev. William L. Sullivan was the chief speaker, giving magnificent addresses, and a large corps of local men were impressed into service. Nothing like it had been seen here for years, and the scene in front of Symphony Hall an hour before the opening of the doors might easily have been mistaken for a jam at the Sunday tabernacle.

The Ministerial Union has been having a revival of interest and power. It is a great thing to meet with ninety or a hundred out of the 125 enrolled members, sing together, listen to two or three fine addresses on a live theme, take part in earnest discussion, tarry for an hour for luncheon, and mingle with the brethren with fine fellowship. Where else in the world can such a thing happen *a hundred Unitarian ministers* gathered in monthly assembly? Themes of recent meetings have been as follows: "A Unitarian Revival;" "Preaching Power;" "Effective Parish Activities."

"Star Islanders"—noted for their zealous and happy loyalty—assembled last month to revive fond acquaintance and to look forward to days ahead. As usual, Mr. Wetherell guided the reunion and gave it its "go." Music, luncheon, reports, reminiscences, plans ahead, all had their place. Two reports were of especial interest—one by Mr. Lawrance for the Corporation, announcing repairs and improvements in the hotel and houses, and concerning the steamer (long since a joke but now to be the pride of the Island); and the other by Mr. Everett, announcing a survey of the Island and a general plan for its eventual permanent development. It was a fine, large meeting, in the general hearty style of the Star Islanders.

We have had an interesting series of installations in near-by churches lately: Rev. Otto Lyding at the Third Religious Society of Dorchester; Rev. Paul H. Drake at Christ Church, Dorchester; Rev. S. C. Beane at Channing Church, Dorchester; Rev. A. D. K. Shurtleff at Marblehead; Rev. James A. Fairley at Jamaica Plain; and Rev. Alfred J. Wilson at Brighton. I find it interesting also to think especially of two of the above parishes, that of the Christ Church, representing the suburban parish, and that in Marblehead, a famous old town where long ago the liberal flame kindled brightly and then almost died out—both now happy and rejuvenated and with the zealous, enthusiastic leadership of new ministers. Christ Church possesses a unique feature in its Hale class of thirty-eight young men, who now and then elect a certain Sunday "Hale Sunday" and send out post card commands for the class to mobilize in full strength. It looks forward eagerly to the erection of a parish house, which seems quite assured, and rejoices in constant additions to the congregation and parish list. Over in Marblehead, with an attractive, compact, modern church, not too big for the eager group of consecrated brethren, a new era seems opening. Long life and great joy to these two parishes—our friends in the Boston suburb and our friends in the home town of John White Chadwick.

At the First Church, Roxbury, Dr. De Normandie has resigned and an invitation has been given Rev. Charles Gay of Portland, Me., to be his successor, which, however, was declined. At Hyde Park, Rev. P. S. Thacher has resigned. At Worcester, South Memorial Church, a unanimous call has been given to Rev. Charles P. Wellman of Dorchester.

Here are a few items gathered from the states to the north. In Maine, Mrs. Scott of Bangor has visited all the Church Alliances in the eastern part of the state and reports much activity. In Portland, noon meetings have been very successful. In Farmington, seat of a normal school, Rev. F. K. Gifford has been settled. In Eastport, Sunday Afternoon Forums have been inaugurated with considerable interest. In Yarmouth, Rev. Leonard Cushman has resigned to accept a call to Medfield, Mass. In Presque Isle, the Sunday school and Alliance Branch have been started afresh, and in Sanford so great is the joy over the prospects of the new church that its walls are almost seen by its future occupants.

In New Hampshire, new missionary spirit is abroad, and in the near future we may look for its results. The State Conference has a considerable fund for missionary work, and the desire has sprung up to make it effective. At Laconia, Rev. Otto E. Duerr has been engaged to push the work for the next five months. Exeter friends have done the unusual thing for our parishes to do: namely, sent a considerable contribution to the Service Pension Fund. In Walpole, the church has taken great interest in community welfare, especially in the public schools, with the result that it has sent a district nurse to the schools and greatly encouraged and inspired the superintendent of schools. In Concord, Rev. Charles Wing has resigned to go to Baltimore, Md. In Francistown, the church has been saddened by the death of its minister, Rev. W. T. Hutchins.

From Vermont comes news that the Burlington church is greatly alive and rejoicing over its one hundredth anniversary. Other churches of the city happily joined in the celebration.

I will end with a few items from the Alliance Headquarters. Everyone will be glad to get the announcement that again, this May meeting week, the Alliance will treat us with *another great meeting in Tremont Temple.* Some were pessimistic last year, *beforehand,* but not after. I venture to say "doubters" will be hard to find this time. Word was received of the illness of Miss Edith G. Pecher, the Alliance missionary in China, but happier news followed—that she had endeared herself to the missionaries with whom she works and "they all have a new conception of Unitarians." Lastly, the Board approves an appeal for the new parish hall in Lawrence, Mass., for $500. The society there is made up largely of new Americans, some of whom were English Unitarians and have come over to work in the Lawrence mills. The society is under charge of Rev. W. S. Nichols and Miss A. B. Carter, the latter a parish worker and employed by the North Middlesex Conference. Here's a good example for other Conferences to follow, who wish to be missionary in deed and spirit!

CHARLES PHELPS WELLMAN.

The principle I have noticed in the life of the reformer is to be noticed also of every great reform: it has to wait, and work its way persistently through the most determined opposition; through times in which there is no encouragement at all, except that which is in the hearts of those who are devoted to it, who know right well if they ask, and seek, and knock, and do not tire, but keep right on, then, as sure as there is an eternal right, the wrong will be at last conquered, and heaven will be won to give what they shall not be weary asking.

ROBERT COLLYER.

FELLOWSHIP NOTICES.

Rev. Herbert A. Lotee of Rochester, N. Y., of the Baptist denomination, has made application for fellowship of the Middle States Committee. Leon A. Harvey, Walter R. Hunt, James A. Fairley.

Rev. Walter Knight is hereby commended to the ministers and churches of the fellowship for a probationary period of six months, ending August 6, 1917. Charles T. Billings, Julian C. Jaynes, Harry Lutz, Committee for New England.

Rev. J. Fagginger Auer, having satisfied the Committee on Fellowship of the New England States, is hereby commended to our ministers and churches. Certificate granted on February 6, 1917. Charles T. Billings, Julian C. Jaynes, Harry Lutz.

The Western Fellowship Committee has received from Rev. W. Rupert Holloway an application for the certificate of commendation issued by this committee. F. S. C. Wicks, Frank A. Gilmore, Ernest C. Smith.

The Western Fellowship Committee has received from Rev. Morley Smith Pettit of the Presbyterian denomination an application for the certificate of commendation issued by this committee. F. S. C. Wicks, Frank A. Gilmore, Ernest C. Smith.

LEAGUE REPORT.

The regular meeting of the New York League of Unitarian Women was held on February 2, 1917, at the Church of the Saviour, Brooklyn, N. Y.

The meeting was largely attended there being 132 present.

Mrs. Bishoprick, the President, presided and opened the meeting with the reading of a poem.

The minutes of the last meeting and the Treasurer's report were read and approved.

Since the last meeting, four new names have been added to the League membership, and with regret we learn of four who have passed away.

A most interesting talk was given by Mrs. Morehouse on the "Story of the Christian Register."

The Nominating Committee submitted its report on nominations for the ensuing year.

Mrs. Davis made the appeal for the collection for the Southern Circuit, where money is very much needed to carry on the work of the liberal faith. The sum of $45 was collected.

The meeting was in charge of Mrs. Walter U. Lawson, Chairman of the Headquarters' Committee, who introduced the speaker, Rev. Richard Boynton of Buffalo, N. Y. His sub-

ject was, "The Vision of Unitarianism." For forty minutes he held the attention of all by his eloquence.

The League was fortunate in having present Rev. Samuel Eliot of Boston, Mass., President of the American Unitarian Association, who spoke briefly but effectively.

Rev. John Lathrop, the minister, brought the meeting to a close with the reciting of the Lord's Prayer.

Mrs. Peirce, President of the Branch Alliance, extended to all an invitation to remain for luncheon.

ADA L. BARRY.

UNITARIAN SERVICE PENSION SOCIETY.

Our society offers a straight pension, considered a deferred salary payment, to all Unitarian ministers, sixty-five years of age or over, who have had an honorable record of at least twenty years' active professional service in the Unitarian fellowship. There are other denominational funds available for cases of accident, disease, or misfortune, which fall outside our very reasonable requirements, and if such other funds are not adequate they, as well as the straight Pension Fund of our society, deserve to be increased.

WHAT THE PENSION CAN DO.

Steady the Ministry.—Many a minister today receives so small a salary that consideration for his family forces him to change churches whenever he is offered a slight advance. A pension which enables a minister to feel safer about the future will help him to feel more content with the present, and will lengthen the average term of service.

Help Smaller Churches.—Many a small church that much needs an experienced leader, but cannot itself pay enough, might get a competent older minister if he could add his pension to the small salary.

Raise the "Dead Line."—A pension is as likely to prolong work for older ministers as to shorten it. Many a church hesitates to call a man of sixty, even though much liked, for fear he will be left on their hands as he grows older. Provide a pension, and you remove this fear that now so cruelly keeps competent ministers from continuing work as they grow older.

Help Recruit the Ministry.—We shall feel better about advising desirable young men and women to enter the ministry if we provide a modest pension for old age.

CONDITIONS DEMANDING A PENSION SYSTEM.

A long period of university training, a meagre professional income, frequent and expensive changes of parishes, an early "deadline," an uncertain and precarious old age—this is the life history, not of all, but of altogether too many of our ministers.

One-half of our churches pay an average salary to their ministers of less than $1,000. Figure up the cost of living, add the cost of the minister's books and the demands made on him for charity, and see for yourselves how much a man with such salary can expect to save for old age. He had better plan to die young; his family at least will have the life insurance.

Of course a church could advertise for a minister who has a private income, or whose wife will help support him, or who will agree to remain a bachelor—but could a self-respecting Protestant church do this?

BEQUESTS WILL HELP MUCH.

Generous persons have written bequests for the Pension Society in their wills. The sum of ten thousand dollars was received last year. The Permanent Fund of the Unitarian Service Pension Society is held by the American Unitarian Association as Trustee, and its conservative management is thus assured.

WHAT HAPPENED LAST YEAR.

One hundred and seventy-five alliances gave $1,383.68, a large increase. Fifty-nine churches gave $1,758.10, also an increase. Fifty-seven ministers contributed $944.20, well knowing the needs of their elder brethren. Twenty-six laymen and women sent $508. Nine Young People's Societies gave $66, which is most gratifying, since it is the members of these societies who are to manage future denominational affairs. For the first time a Sunday school contributed, sending $2.70, and setting a worthy example for the others to follow. The number of pensioners was fifty-five, and the pension paid was $126.38. It should be immediately increased to $300, and ultimately to $500.

WHAT YOU CAN DO.

Ask Your Church to make an annual contribution, however small, for the pension cause.

Help Increase the Annual Contribution from the $4,662.68 of last year to $10,000, as recommended by vote last May at the annual meeting of the American Unitarian Association.

Bequests are needed for the Permanent Fund—remember this when your advice is sought about making wills.

Yours affectionately,

UNITARIAN SERVICE PENSION SOCIETY.

James P. Parmenter, President; Paul Revere Frothingham, and Percy A. Atherton, Vice-Presidents; Robert S. Loring, Secretary; John H. Applebee, Treasurer, 933 Maryland Ave., Syracuse, N. Y.; George H. Ellis, Harold G. Arnold, John H. Lathrop, and George R. Bishop, Directors.

Please send all contributions to the Treasurer.

IN MEMORIAM OF MRS. EMMA SAVAGE.

The news of the death of Mrs. Emma Savage on the 5th of January at Plainfield, N. J., will be heard with deep regret by many New England Unitarians. With her husband, the late Rev. John Arthur Savage, she had worked most faithfully and devotedly in their successive parishes at Nantucket, Belfast, Maine, and Medfield, Mass. Both in the home and in the church, and in all social and religious activities, she was a true helpmate. When Rev. Mr. Savage, through the influence of enlarged thought and study, became converted to the liberal faith, she courageously joined him in leaving the older denomination and dogmas in which they had been brought up, and in fidelity to the dictates of reason and conscience went forth, like Abraham of old, from her accustomed spiritual home into the freer atmosphere of a wider faith. In this solemn change she was ready to endure the severest hardships and bore them with heroic self-sacrifice. In all the churches with which she became connected, her sweet and gentle nature endeared her to all the successive circles of her associates. Her painstaking and thrifty household activity, her devoted motherhood, and practical wisdom were matched by an equally earnest enthusiasm for the growth and diffusion of the new principles which had secured her loyalty. United with the firm will, clear, good sense, endurance, and skill in family guidance which marked her, there were also combined a modesty, cheerfulness, and warm, affectionate nature, a conscientious aspiration for higher things, and a spirit touched with heavenly light, which gave her character a genuine distinction and which consecrates her memory to all who thoroughly knew her.

JAMES T. BIXBY,
Yonkers, N. Y.

NEW BOOKS.

Books recently received for review are as follows:

THE CREED OF EPICTETUS, as contained in the Discourses, Manual, and Fragments, synthetically arranged and edited by Ulysses G. B. Pierce, Ph. D. With an Introductory Study of the Faith of a Stoic. The Beacon Press. 203 pp. $1.35 net.

SOURCES OF FAITH AND HOPE, a Study of the Soul, by Herbert H. Mott, American Unitarian Association. 150 pp. 75 cents net.

THE ESSENTIALS OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION, by Charles William Heathcote, Instructor of Religious Education, Theological Department, Temple University. With Introduction by Russell H. Conwell, D. D. Sherman French & Co. 284 pp. $1.50 net.

THE BELIEF IN IMMORTALITY, a Psychological, Anthropological, and Statistical Study, by James H. Lenba, Professor of Psychology in Bryn Mawr College. Sherman French & Co. 340 pp. $2.00 net.

SOCIALISM AND THE ETHICS OF JESUS, by Henry C. Vedder, Professor of Church History in Crozer Theological School. Macmillan Co. 527 pp. 50 cents.

UNITARIAN THOUGHT, by Ephraim Emerton, Professor of Church History in Harvard University. 309 pp. $2.00 net.

HYMN.

By REV. H. H. BARBER, D. D.

Our Father, God, we dare to claim
The fullness of that highest name;
We know thee as the Perfect Good,
And rest us in thy Fatherhood.

Children of thee, we bless the tie
That binds our one humanity,
And own the universal plan
That brings the brotherhood of man.

We follow where the Master leads,
Unbound by subtleties of creeds;
And seek the Way, with all our powers,
That leads to thee, his God and ours.

Thy call to higher life we own,
In character and service shown;
And in the joy of heart and mind,
Earnest of full salvation find.

Forever upward still, and on,
Till work and destiny be one:
Beyond all sorrow, sin, and strife,
Immortal Good, Eternal Life.

—[Arranged from "Our Faith" for Unitarian Day.

LOVE'S SHRINE

Love had not sought a perfect shrine
  Wherein to bide,
Else he had never entered mine;
  But once inside,
His own perfection charms me so,
  Where'er I turn
I see his altar fire aglow
  And feel it burn.
If he shall leave my open door
  On wings of light,
And I shall see him come no more,
  It will be night.

HARRIET LAKE-BURCH.

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For belief in the divine humanity of Jesus, because they hold that all souls are children of the Infinite Spirit, and that the divine sonship is a universal manifestation, not a unique phenomenon.

For civic reform, economic justice, and social regeneration, believing that the mission of the church is now and here to establish the divine commonwealth of love and peace on earth.

For eternal life—not merely another life of blissful ease, which we shall discover beyond the grave; but life which already lays hold upon immortality because it is even now in harmony with God's divine order.